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SUBJECT: Friday Update

A super busy week and lots happening at City Hall. The staff is addressing quite a bit and the leadership throughout the organization is impressive!

First, big congratulations are in order for Alice Dowdin Calvillo and Rachel Radell Harris on their election to the City Council. Quite an honor and lots of work ahead. Congratulations also for Dan Grumley, Roger Luebke and Tom Palmer on their candidacy's. Elections are the foundational root of our democracy and people who venture into the arena, exchange ideas and take on the challenge are all to be commended.

A couple notes this week:

City Council Agenda for November 9, 2020

- Amendment to the Pioneer Energy Agreement providing for the membership of the City of Placerville and the County of El Dorado.
- Appointment of Wendy Black to the Arts Commission
- Extension of the Covid 19 State of Emergency
- Operating Standards for the Auburn Airport
- Curb Rehabilitation Program
- City Manager's Project Report

As a note, upcoming City Council Meetings will have lighter agenda's. November 23 will have a short agenda, December 7 will be the City Council Re-organization and a more ceremonial meeting. There will be no meeting on December 21.

A few more items:

A couple notes on things happening:

- Wednesday was the Placer Covid-19 Economic Zoom to get a status on the County. We have slipped into the “red” tier based on “adjusted case rate” going to 5.0. Dr. Oldham has submitted an “adjudication” argument to CDPH that “Test Positivity” (our is 2.5- Orange) is the better metric to use. This has essentially bought us time until Monday when either they buy that argument, or we drop back into the “red tier”. This is a “Hail Mary” by the County and may not go anywhere but it is worth a try. Bottom line.... We may be in the red tier next week!
- Placer County trending for two days actually had us in the “purple tier” with a 7.0 adjusted case rate for a couple days! That is the nightmare scenario for the County but a reality, as is for practically every county, because positive rates are trending up. With the holidays and social gatherings happening it does not look good! Starting 2021 in the purple would be horrible! People need to stay out of large groups, wear a mask and follow the protocols on staying safe.
- Also discussed the Placer Shares Impact Grants, the \$5m program approved by the Board of Supervisors last week. The program has two sides- \$3 million which will go to prop up the non-profits providing food, rental assistance and mental health services. \$2m will go to small businesses which simply cannot re-open to full operation which had revenues between \$1m-\$5m with 10-50 employees in the food, lodging, barber shops and fitness. These grant periods will begin on November 12-20 for businesses and November 20-December 7 for Non-profits.
- The Measure S sales tax measure to fund fire abatement and protection did not pass. The absence of the additional revenue obviously means a more limited approach to addressing the wildfire threat and will be within available resources. This means working from a paradigm and planning which will require a more reactive and preparedness basis. Some basics will include:
 - Planning will focus mostly on “reaction”, “preparedness” and “prevention” within the scale and limits of existing resources.
 - Response will focus within the scope of existing and available resources including within the limits of on duty staff, mutual aid and regional cooperation with other fire agencies.
 - Prevention will focus on establishing clear “standards” for property maintenance and clearance, communication with both public and private land owners to maintain such. This will be done through a collaborative approach with other local agencies, property owners and through code enforcement, when necessary.
 - Wildland preparedness will focus on working within means and opportunity. This means seeking grants and cooperative arrangements to accomplish fuel management. The opportunity will encourage property owners to work collectively to reduce financial burdens and to coordinate efforts.
 - Within available means, our focus will be mostly on public education on fuel management, cooperative efforts/opportunities (maintenance), evacuation and defensive planning (preparedness).
- Staff is working on the assemblage of key documents related to contracting and our overall processes for how we procure capital improvements and services for the City. Look for the development of a centralized system for contracting with documents, legal requirements and process.
- Staff met with representatives from the Placer County Transportation Agency regarding the reinvention of transit within the region. A really good meeting discussing how to modernize public transit away from fixed route to a more



demand based service. We will be looking at best practices in “micro transit”, a more “Uber” approach to service and collaboration with the State Parks and “canyon” based organization. The idea of a “canyon/confluence” shuttle is on the table, as is an app based call notification system. We are going to look at opportunities to increase ridership and become a leader in regional transit!

Finally, I was on the Meddlers Zoom Meeting last Tuesday and Auburn Journal Managing Editor Bill Poindexter was the speaker. I was very impressed with his representation of small town media and grateful for his honesty on the challenges they face and their efforts at evolution.

I am a huge fan of small town newspapers and their importance in making our communities the places they are. Small town media is one of our most endangered species in our society and it is critical that we do our best to support and insure their survival. The Auburn Journal is one of those papers and we need to do all we can to support them.

Small town newspapers are closing regularly. In California, literally hundreds of small papers have ceased publication because of electronic and social media replacing the public interest. Advertising has moved into different markets and many folks stare at lit screens versus thumbing through the thrown paper on their driveway.

The difference is that the new media does not cover local issues. Keeping local government accountable is one of the key functions of the small town newspaper. Larger media will never cover City Hall, report on critical city issues or even seek to understand things which are being debated within a community. It is the small town paper which covers the local high school, highlights those volunteers and businesses which are make giant impacts to make the community special. The small paper is the one who makes “stars” out of the regular people making a difference in all of our lives every day.

I have always felt that it is the small town newspaper which is the glue which binds the community. They record our history and tell our story each week. Without them, we would be without the common source of journalism to really know and understand what is happening and who is making a difference. They are the difference between keeping our local identity versus being absorbed into the giant morass of the larger urban area, or worse, not being covered at all.

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Have a nice weekend.

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